

THE ACADEMY AND LITERATURE

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EPITAPH.

If I should ever be in England's thought
After I die,
Say, "There were many things he might have bought
And did not buy.

Unhonoured by his fellows he grew old
And trod the path to hell,
But there were many things he might have sold
And did not sell."

X.

LIFE AND LETTERS.

WHAT powers the authorities may have under the Defence of the Realm Act we do not know, but it is high time their attention was directed to quarters where frantic efforts to bolster up the conscription campaign are leading certain writers beyond what in our opinion are the bounds of things permissible. In the current *English Review*, under the heading "Britain's Duty," the frothy Mr. Austin Harrison has the impudence to state that "Russia, our great illusion, has failed us." With the merest reference to the fact that writers of the Harrison school are for ever talking hypocritically of the irritation of our Allies at our voluntary system, we should like to know how much longer this pipsqueak is to be allowed to insult an heroic and sorely harassed nation. It would be a good thing for him if he had to take part in some desperate rearguard action,

preferably in one such as we are credibly informed the Russians had recently to experience, and in which they had little else but sticks and stones with which to defend themselves. He knows nothing of the realities of war. His inordinate vanity prompts him to all sorts of dangerous nonsense, and it is high time, we repeat, he was stopped.

In the above connection we welcome Mr. Hilaire Belloc's indictment of Lord Harmsworth in the *Morning Post* of September 8th. "One discussion," says Mr. Belloc, "can no longer be avoided," and he goes on to ask whether it is tolerable that "in so grave a crisis of life and death public confidence shall be undermined." For our own part, we see no need at all for interrogation marks in this grave matter. The anarchist who sees no difference between liberty and license must be suppressed.

The editor of the *Saturday Review* has evidently pondered the suggestion put forward last week in these columns that if England is to be democratic in anything but name conscription without a general election that would afford our soldiers a voice in the matter is impossible. But in a letter to the *Morning Post* he has bitten from our suggestion only what he has felt inclined to chew. From the letter in question we append the following extract:—

If the House of Commons, in the coming debates on national obligatory service, on the twin problems of munitions and of men and on other military matters, is to have any real authority with the nation it must clearly have the advice of Service members far more than it has during the past year. . . . The nation wishes to know what soldiers think and desire, and this it can best learn through the Service members.

Mr. Dewar, conscriptionist, is a clever person. He knows that the Service members are also most of them conscriptionists. What millions of other soldiers think and desire, however, he may know later. In the meantime, we can tell him that there are other representatives than Service members, and that, given an honest general election, the latest big gun of our charming plutocrats would be effectually spiked.

Persons of divided mind upon this subject of conscription may be recommended to read, mark, and inwardly digest the following remarks of M. Pierre Mille, one of a party of four literary men invited recently to visit the British Grand Fleet:—

As long as I have to talk of German submarines I may affirm, despite contrary statements made by the German Admiralty and by the newspapers, that England

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has already sunk a lot of them. Indeed, the number they have sunk is so considerable that their one desire seems to be for submarine warfare to continue. The duty of the submarine has become a nightmare to the German Fleet. Despite their habits of passive obedience, the crews have flatly refused to go on board, and the Government is obliged to appeal for volunteers.

When German conscriptionists have to appeal for volunteers, English rogues and fools may well bellow for conscripts.

Mr. George B. Shaw has bobbed up again. He is staying at Torquay, it seems, and has been visiting wounded soldiers with the laudable desire to see that they were provided with good literature. And he has been interviewed, of course. One of these days, when the wicked Bernard ceases from troubling, the weary interviewer will be at rest. In the meantime this is what Mr. Shaw said:—

I went to hospital and took with me a list of books which I asked the matron to give to the men, so that they might mark what books they would like.

I said I would give one hundred books, and jokingly remarked that I intended offering a hundred Bibles, but if any of the men would like any other book instead they could mark it on the list.

When the list was returned I found that the men had selected 72 general books, and they were polite enough to intimate that they would take the remaining 28 in copies of my own works.

All of which goes to prove that Mr. Shaw's modesty is strangely at variance with his sympathy with the wounded, and that our soldiers are either considerably lacking in judgment or, as we prefer to believe, very polite indeed.

In these days, when writers on economics must be making quite a lot of money by pointing out sternly that a herring and a half costs three ha'pence, it is not surprising that certain of our novelists are not above turning an honest guinea by means of facts and figures. That they should wax lyrical about them, however, is one of those phenomena which keep us loving life. Here is a presence rising strangely beside the waters—Mr. Charles Marriott, to wit—upon the subject of economy:—

Most people if asked to personify Economy would picture her as a forbidding jade: something between a school marm and a female food-faddist; spectacled, flat-chested, with skimp hair and bony fingers. To me she presents herself rather as Keats' "O latest born and loveliest vision far"; the very Soul of things, divinely slender, maybe, but warm and sensitive to her finger tips, and with ever a smile, half tender and half mocking, for that funny old person, the human body, that will go blundering amongst its pleasures like a bull in a wild bees' nest.

Well, well, and deary us! After this we should not turn a hair if someone suggested that the original "latest born and loveliest vision far" was that of Dr. Adam Smith composing his *Wealth of Nations*.

And talking about Keats and bees and things, we must remind Mr. Marriott that the poet saw the bee in quite a different light to that in which he, Mr. Marriott, sees it. We remember:—

What is more soothing than the pretty hummer
That stays one moment in an open flower,
And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?

Which lines, we are bound to admit, are not poetry, but they do reveal a gentle, kindly nature which would have quailed before Mr. Marriott's sources of inspiration.

If we were inclined to reflect upon the idiosyncracies of theatrical managers, we should doubtless better understand why some of them appear to think that THE ACADEMY is a medium of criticism for revue productions, and others that playwrights of the quality of Mr. Pinero are not of sufficient importance to merit our attention. At any rate, and with neither sorrow nor anger, we have to record that we did not receive a ticket for the recent first performance of "The Big Drum." Mr. Pinero, however, we are pleased to hear, by altering his play, has accommodated himself to the taste of his audience, Mr. Alexander's trousers are doubtless as faultlessly creased as ever, we ourselves, as we say, are not upset, so all's well with the world and the drama.

The *Spectator* publishes a sonnet, called "England to Denmark," and signed by Herbert Warren, Magdalen College, Oxford. Herbert Warren, of course, is Dr. Warren, Professor of Poetry at Oxford University and President of Magdalen. Here are the first eight lines of Dr. Warren's sonnet:—

Great little land, old comrades of the sea,
Salt of its salt, whelps of its Viking brood,
Sharers with us in its free fearless mood;
Narrow your home, world-wide your chivalry!
Now call we kin for the past and the years to be,
Now is the name of righteous Cnut renewed,
Forgiven and forgot all days of feud,
In your sure aid and swift sweet sympathy.

And here is a sonnet which has lately appeared in the *Sunday Times*:—

Mounting his stairs of azure and of gold
The English lark sings in the autumn weather,
For joy that knoweth neither tie nor tether
And is not troubled if the world grows old;
While you who were as blithesome and as bold,
And held your days lightly as any feather,
Sleep the high sleep that dead men sleep together,
Careless of what is done and what is told.

I know that all our England shone before you
When you went down. It made a radiance
Even of the front of Death. Oh, woman's son
You died for England . . . valiant as she that bore you
And sent you forth with a still countenance
And broke her heart for England—and lives on!

Which of these writers ought to be Professor of Poetry at Oxford?

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TREVELLOE.

Before the house was built, the wood still preserved its antique mystery. Badger, fox and owl moved undisturbed about its leafy alleys, and with the clattering wood pigeons and laughing yaffles held undisputed sway. But the day came when the owner, grown rich enough (one supposes) to "improve" his own property, took it into his head to build a shooting-box there, a retreat which to the visitor weary of dusty towns and smoky railways would seem pleasant enough with its neat gravel paths and ornamental slopes of daffodils and bluebells. And so the builders had come, preluded by a sombrely dressed and forbidding group of architects and sanitary inspectors who, tripping delicately from one dry spot of ground to another (for the stream had at that time a little overflowed), pointed up and down, and with wide, comprehensive gestures prepared to alter the place to the owner's new requirements.

At first a few carts, laden with stones, rattled into the silence along the road beside the wood, where only hitherto had passed the slowly lumbering timber-waggons, tradesmen's carts, plying between villages, a farmer driving his trap to market, the doctor in his gig. There followed an army of workmen who hewed down trees and blew up rocks, levelled the ground by filling in here, digging out there, until at last amongst a new forest of planks and poles brick walls began to rise to the accompaniment of the clangour of hammers, the chopping of wood and bricks, and of all the hideous noises that are the travail of bringing forth such a prodigy: all these intensified by the stillness, as if the wood looked on sullenly, as a captive watches the execution of its fellows. And gradually, as the house was finished, and the barrel-shaped pigeon-loft, mocking at its own "rusticity," was affixed to an outhouse, paths were made, gravel lavishly laid down, and on the side of the as yet untouched wood a terrace was raised, and crowned at intervals with huge cannon-balls of cement, looking like relics of some gigantic battle which had alighted considerably and in perfect order upon the parpaet, or which, dug up from some earthy resting-place, had been "restored" and so placed to slumber out a conspicuous immortality. Next, great motor lorries, warehouses on wheels, made their appearance, and for several days men staggering under heavy weights went in and out of the now completed house; and at last a fashionable motor hummed upon the drive,

from which the owner himself stepped forth, and, viewing the work which he had conceived, looked upon it and saw that it was good.

Meanwhile, smarting under the indignity of a human construction thus easily foisted upon it for a second time (for once before an artist—in all innocence, no doubt—had raised a wooden hut upon its sacred slopes and had profaned the silence with the chatter of models and the too trees unbearable reek of a paraffin stove), the wood remained sullen and forbidding, yet conscious that, while itself still stood, ivy would wind amongst those slated walls, and the unborn passer-by, gazing at the ruin, would wonder what folly had prompted man to build in such a lonely spot. The ancient trees, which had been hewed back a little way from the cemented terrace, seemed yet to crowd against it, as some threatening mob might push nearly against the soldiery but keeping distance out of respect for the weapons which science has put into the hands of those set over it. At the first onslaught of the builders dryads had flitted, like evicted cottagers, from tree to tree and had held, one may reasonably suppose, "indignation meetings" in some far corner of the wood; what time the nymphs, crouching amongst the withered irises at the stream's edge, plotted to do mischief to those who had laid waste their haunts, by some sudden inundation, or by means which Nature would contrive to the discomfort of all sanitary contractors. And possibly their designs succeeded for, as one passes the entirely useless gateway (its posts also surmounted by the ridiculous cannon-balls) that makes pretence to guard the house, scarcely ever are the windows unlatched, or does the smoke, like a flag betokening residence, hang from the unblackened chimneys.

If, at such a period of emptiness, one greatly daring crosses the terrace, and, stepping over the few yards of neutral ground, enters the wood, he will find—so long as he does not look back to be turned, as was Lot's wife, into stony astonishment at the hideous possibilities of man's hands—he will find it unchanged. The yaffle still laughs from tree to tree, or, out of sight, taps monotonously at the mossy trunks. Wood-pigeons rise clattering at the snapping of twig sharp as a rifle-shot, and perhaps a brown owl, wakened rudely from his dreams, crashes away in alarm: or the quick eye may see a fox's red brush slinking amongst the heaped-up rocks so little changed since the great earthquake a thousand years ago, which, so the people tell, overwhelmed the wide lands between Tol-pedn-penwith and the Lizard, but spared Paul church bells to call, instead

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of over wooden valleys, across the water to the Mount's answering peak.

But a few paces into the wood and the house is hidden. Here between the shining boles the spring lays down her carpet of blue.

But now decaying beech-leaves hide the many rabbit-burrows, pitfalls for the unwary feet. Brackish pools, black and shining like polished metal rather than water, are dotted in every hollow. The half-light, filtering through the multitude of branches, makes for mystery, and as one comes across a low, grass-grown wall one wonders why such an obstruction should have been raised in the clear ways of the wood, and, catching a little of man's natural fear of trees, thinks of ambushes and of wild, half-naked figures fighting across fields ere ever the trees were there. And after them and their bee-hive huts came the Druids, and the savage priests, who sacrificed in the desolate temple the ruins of which lie not a mile distant in farm grounds, a fortuitous rubbing-stone for cows. They all in their turn passed the sloping wood no more, travelling each in his appointed time to lands still farther than the Scillies, which then marked the farthest outpost of our isles. Later, along the same dry track (where now the road runs) which skirts the wood above the marsh gay with billowy cotton-grass, perhaps a horseman, survivor of the great fight at Bollait, urged his weary beast past the darkening trees, scaring a grouting badger, and pushed on desperately to find some friendly stading where he could shelter for the night. And only a few hundred years ago the noise of the Spaniard's guns rumbled up from Porth Enys (which later men call Mousehole), and straggling bands of terror-stricken refugees poured along the road to Trove. All these the wood looked on and now remembered, as a man remembers the scenes of his childhood.

And especially at sunset, when the whole land is so hushed, as to be disturbed by the passage of a bird's wing. Then was its hour of glory, as the sun streamed over the western hill, lighting almost to new life the fallen beech-leaves, and weaving golden rays from every tree, when on the bounding wall by the new iron gate a furze-bush glowed with a thousand yellow lamps, and the dead and blackened pool beneath took warmth from the sky. "Enter these enchanted woods, you who dare!"

And so the twilight fell. A badger galloped across the road, ghostly: and the wood, looking out with its aged eyes at the white road which swings between the hillside and the dusky slip of moor

dotted with silver pools, saw no shaggy horses driven home by a sleepy plough boy, but a cavalcade of knights walking their dripping steeds, lances at rest, and swords clanking against their mailed sides, laughing and talking, towards the not far distant land of Lyonesse.

GERALD MILLER.

ON SERVING ON A JURY.

Jurymen, properly enough, take themselves very seriously. Once the personal inconveniences of attending courts of law are forgotten and their attention is directed towards their public duty, they become super-human creations breathing a rarified air of democracy. People often wonder how it is that any man can be induced to accept the position of foreman, but they have never had occasion to observe the seriousness of jurymen, nor have they realised all there is to know about human nature. It is impossible to suppose that out of twelve men there should be no one who, after a not too lengthy pressing, is unwilling to be persuaded that his own view of himself is a correct one, and that alone, among all present, he is fitted to be a leader of men. An unduly sensitive jurymen does not relish his first case. The evidence may be blacker than ink, the prisoner's personal appearance more than discouraging, yet there is present in his mind that awful Doubt. Surely it is not impossible, he thinks, that by an almost incredible series of misfortunes and mistakes the prisoner has been unfortunately placed. After all, among all these people in court, the judge, counsel, witnesses, police, there is one person only who really knows. And between the prisoner and you yawns a gulf of the conjectural unseen which sooner or later you must leap. After the summing-up you consider, and reluctantly you agree with all the other gentlemen who, oddly enough, seem to have found no difficulties at all about the obvious construction to be put upon the evidence. The verdict is announced, and then, when evidence is given that the prisoner had been convicted several times before on a similar charge, you are profoundly but illogically relieved.

How admirable to a trafficker in words is the art of summing-up! To be able to disentangle elusive points, to arrange them in such nice logical positions, positions upon positions, aspect upon aspects, to simply "pooh-pooh" so delicately without saying it, and to display such aplomb in regard to the delicate matters with: "Gentlemen, gentlemen, you are men of the world!" After listening to many cases,

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after giving many verdicts, it occurs to you that this amiable and easy gentleman knows better than any jurymen, be he gathered from the wisest district in London, what kind of verdict should be given. Not that the judge tells you. He is too delightful a balancer of probabilities and aspects for that. But behind the placidly shrewd manner there must lurk a certainty that the legal world would lurch into the unnameable abyss if, after such a marshalling of facts, the jury said "nay" when they should say "aye." Then you realise that whatever verdict the jury cares to give really does not matter at all. It does not, let it be hastily added, affect ultimate justice one way or the other. If the jury brought in a verdict of "not guilty" when a person was guilty, it is difficult to imagine what would happen, but there can be no doubt that the judge would be equal to the situation, and would know how to dissemble any displeasure he might feel. But jurymen in this court did not bring in verdicts of "not guilty." Their course was always painfully clear, and they acted upon it with a strenuous sense of duty. When they registered their verdicts in cases in which the prisoner had suffered acutely, or was unfortunate, the judge would bow towards the jury in a manner which implied "Very proper, I am sure," and to the prisoner he would say briskly: "Well, I don't think any good would be served by sending you to prison. I'll bind you over for twelve months. . . . You may go." Of course the jury were very bewildered, blew out their cheeks, and said indignantly among themselves: "Why, we brought him in guilty!"

To men whose youthful dreams of policemen, of detectives, of burglars, and of all the minutæ of crime have all been suddenly realised in tangible shapes it is difficult to remember compassionate things. It is difficult to remember that they are not in a police court, and that a seemingly indiscriminate handing out of sentences is not necessarily the order of the day. Whether a prisoner has, in fact, committed a crime against society is the beginning and end of a jury's business. But in a court of this kind there are further and subtler matters to consider. It is astonishing how the mere fact of a man stealing a pair of boots should raise questions as to his ever having been disposed to work for his living, his ordinary treatment of his wife, and, above all, whether he has been driven into one of those dolorous corners into which unhappy circumstances can drive poor devils. Counsel may plead and prisoners may argue, but the most significant and important event in the entire course of a case is a silence, a pause. When everything has been said that has to be said, the judge sits thinking out psychological problems and everybody in court waits for him. You gaze with ad-

miration at anyone who has the recollection and presence of mind to keep without embarrassment so many people waiting. At last he looks up sharply and sends a prisoner to prison or sets him free. You go out of court with a lively sense of the importance of maintaining judges of this kind and not those who are merely educated policemen.

There are some people whose existence is noteworthy only because their occupation is to assist at moments of crisis, moments which must always be regarded by the persons chiefly concerned as of supreme importance. Judges, undertakers, nurses, lawyers and the like are often remembered by us, not because we bear them any ill-will or affection, or in any way regard them as personally interesting, but simply because they have been the human furniture in scenes of dilemma and pain. They have no identity apart from their appearance in these situations. There they have taken shapes which fit into a general scheme of ugly experience. In some such way must those in court appear to a prisoner as he stands in the dock. For many a prisoner it is one of the most important and unpleasant days of his life. Jurymen who go home to their tea and pick up the thread of their ordinary concerns, counsel who conduct many cases, and the judge who looks so bored, all give an impression of having many other interests. But a prisoner's interests are all centred upon one idea. He does not want to go to gaol. Some, it is true, dissemble their anxiety on this score and gaze at the proceedings with an air of abstraction or of extreme boredom. Their appearance suggests, as sometimes it is intended to suggest, that there has been some vast mistake, and it is incumbent upon all these busy-bodies to extricate themselves from a muddle of their own making. The majority of prisoners, however, are anxious, and one realises that their feverish demeanour will afterwards be recalled by them as having prevented an adequate expression of the honesty of their characters. Just as an amateur orator's best speech is delivered to himself on his way home so no doubt a prisoner's best defence is spoken afterwards in the solitude of a cell.

We are called upon to serve as jurymen because we are potentially of the criminal classes ourselves. This is one of the subtle facts of democracy which is liable to make the average jurymen exceedingly angry if it is pointed out to him. As he watches that dismal procession in and out of the dock an unfamiliar world appears to him. He gazes at it curiously, but with detachment. The walls of the dock enclose a corner of existence upon which no man who regularly pays his rates and taxes cares to ponder. But his detachment is not caused by unusual innocence. It is caused by his failure to recognise that the corner of the world disclosed by the dock is in reality symbolical of a corner of his own soul.

HERBERT GARLAND.

THE ACADEMY

RED ROSE.

Ῥόδα μ' εἶπεν

Red rose importuneth the Lover, and he answereth her.

THE red rose called to me,
"Be thou my Love;
Lo, I am fire and flame
For love of thee."
I said to the red rose,
"It is in starry white,
With brows and breasts of snow,
That my Love goes."

She continueth to invite him and praiseth herself.

"COME to me, come to me,
I shall be excellence,
Softness and bloom and myrrh
And heavy sleep," saith she.
"And I have doves, as of old,
My lips are crimson joy,
And my smiles are of light,
And my tears are of gold."

She telleth him of her lovers, and biddeth him be the chief of them.

"THREE Kings rage at my door,
They would have love of me,
Till I look forth on them,
They are mean men and poor.
"In purple they go drest,
And bright gifts each King bears,
Come thou and be with us,
And I will love thee best."

She describeth her chamber and the pleasures thereof.

"THERE is a chamber lies
In the heart of my house,
Secret and sweet and dim,
Lit only with mine eyes.
"We will burn spices there,
And we will say to Life,
'Bring now for our delight
All that is good and fair.'"

The Lover telleth her of the chamber of his own Love.

I SAID, "No Kings may wait
Against my white Love's door,
She hath no Love save one,
She needeth not such state.
"Her chamber is of blue,
A gold lamp shines therein;
A lily and a babe
Are in her chamber too."

The Lover falleth captive to her beauty.

He parleyeth with her.

They sleep.

The awakening.

They are to ride forth.

They ride, and the Lover seeth his own Love.

RED rose, red rose,
Oh, thou red rose!
I went into her house
Upon the slow day's close,
I lay down on her bed,
She smiled her smile of light,
She wept her tears of gold:
"Oh, thou red rose!" I said.

"RED rose, red rose,
Red rose and rose of mine,
Behold we are one soul,
With love for its repose."
She laughed, like one who sings,
Saying, "We are one soul."
She thought of my white Love,
And I of those three Kings.

SHE thought of those three Kings,
And I of my white Love:
A cold moon look'd at us,
Chill from a thousand springs.

I said, "But we are one."
She said, "Yea, we are one."
We slept a lover's sleep
Until that moon was gone.

AT dawn she stirred and woke.
I said, "O red, red rose,
What of my little white Love?"
And never a word she spoke.

Before her mirror long
Stood she, and tired herself,
Her hair flamed in the sun,
Her laugh was like a song.

"THE day is fair," she said,
"We will ride forth," said she,
"I on a milk-white horse,
Thou on a roan of red."

"The world is deck'd like a bride,
And sharp and sweet the air,
Those kings shall follow us,
Thou ridest at my side."

WE rode forth into the dawn,
All a-glitter and shine,
Along the sleepy streets,
Past lodge and river and lawn,
And fields that good men till;
And out by the western gate
I saw my little white Love
Simpling upon a hill.

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*He sheweth her
to Red rose.*

*He will not go
to his own
Love.*

*Red Rose dealeth
shrewdly with
him.*

*And leaveth him
to perish.*

He riseth up.

The end.

I SAID, "Red rose, red rose,
Seest thou who is there?
It is my own white Love,
Mark with what grace she goes."

"Pardie, pardie, good Sir,
Is it thy lady Love?
Then, if thou lovest me true,
Get down and speak with her."

SHE smiled her smile of light,
She pursed her crimson lips,
She let her hand touch mine,
Her eyes shone very bright.

I said, "Red rose, I ween
That thou and I are as one,
I would not leave thy side
An she were Mary Queen."

SO that we rode and came
Unto a fair green place;
She put her head on my breast,
And softly said my name.

Those three Kings stood apart,
Plotting my death they stood;
She took a jewelled knife,
And stabbed me in the heart.

AND turned her milk-white steed,
And kissed me on the lips,
And laughed to those three Kings,
And left me there to bleed.

And, with those Kings, did ride
Away in the sunshine:
I could not wish her hurt,
"O red, red rose," I cried.

LIKE torches in the sky
At night the stars awoke,
The ghost of me stood up
And ached exceedingly.

The world seemed full of shows:
I went to mine own door,
And look'd on my white Love,
And cried, "O red, red rose!"

SPRING sitteth at her loom,
Weaving her green and gold,
The sweet lark sitteth in heaven,
And thou in thy red room!

My white Love, still as a mouse,
Still and quiet and pale,
Sitteth beside her babe,
And thou in thy red house!

FRENCH POETRY IN FLANDERS

Bound for Mons six years ago there was need to forewarn friends of my coming. The Post Office clerk (it was the Head P.O. at Liverpool) had never heard of the place; and, turning it up in the guide-book, found *Bergen* following the name in brackets. He desired to know the meaning of this, and being then a stranger to the country, I could not at first conjecture until it struck me that *Berg* meant mountain, as did *Mons*, and that the two names were respectively Germanic and Latin equivalents for a single place-name diversely known to the Belgians according to their use of the Flemish or the French tongue.

The propaganda in favour of Flemish as against French in Belgium has had many generous and sincere apologists; but, regarded from any but a parochial standpoint, it must be considered as a fruitless apostolate. Political and practical necessity alike forbid its success. While every educated Fleming must perforce know French, the Walloon can forego the acquisition of Flemish without any drawback to his intellectual development. The advantages of French as a medium for the study of matters that are of international interest and have developed through international research is recognised even in the Flemish Universities, where the courses are all delivered in the speech of Racine and Molière, if with another intonation. There used to be occasional breezes in the Belgian Chamber when a Flemish patriot would persist in addressing his fellows in his local tongue; but he wrought only his own discomfiture, for to more than one-half of his hearers his arguments were Greek. And here is the crux of the difficulty: for good work, as Flemish literature can show, no man working in it can hope for a very wide audience. The foremost Flemings, therefore—at least, if they would receive their dues—must write in French, as Maeterlinck and Verhaeren have done.

M. Verhaeren needs no introduction here, though we are hardly yet properly aware of the manner in which he has curbed and trained to the poetic highway the indocile monster of modern industrialism. But even were he unknown to us, his poetry is so wholly his own that it may almost be said of him that he owes nothing to France but its language, even his French being weighted (like that of M. Cammaerts) with stresses and broken rhythms that are alien to the ears of native-born Frenchmen; while the catastrophe of war has already revealed the latter to a double public by work wholly unlike any

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other English or French war poetry that has come our way, for its appeal to universal human sentiments in the quiet tones of a companion rather than by full-chested and overt declamation.

Judged by the signs of its racial forbears, nothing could have been more English—or perhaps Scotch—than the earliest poems of M. Maeterlinck, and these signs of affinity his later and masterly rendering of "Macbeth" served only to confirm. Returning the compliment by giving his lines an English dress, we may find how near a cousin he is to those unknown border minstrels who first caught the ears of the *cognoscenti* one hundred and fifty years ago through the zeal of good Bishop Percy of Dromore.

The seven maids of Orlamonde,
Whenas the fairy lifeless lay,
The seven maids of Orlamonde
Went groping for a way.

And they have lit their seven lamps,
And opened up the turret stair,
Thrown open wide four hundred doors,
And found no daylight there.

Then come they to the sounding caves,
And downward o'er the rocky floor,
And there they find a golden key
Within a lockit door.

They see the Ocean thro' the seams,
And fear of death doth flee their wit:
Upon the lockit door they smite,
But dare not open it.

To find the French strain in his muse we must go to the later symbolists, who trace their descent through Baudelaire and Verlaine. This vein of M. Maeterlinck has so recently been worked into the English of Mr. Bernard Miall's renderings that we forbear to compete; nor has it that importance in the bulk of its author's output that would justify very exhaustive analysis. Others there are to whom it is staple and in no wise a whim, and of these the direct discipleship of Georges Rodenbach (D. 1898) is perhaps the most open and avowed. Baudelaire's dislike of the Belgians—to whom, indeed, he showed himself as a bogey, and then blamed them for not clasping him as a brother—has been repaid by the sincerest form of flattery. The curious animism that informs the work of Rodenbach is quite like Baudelaire, though the former is not capable of satanic laughter at his own creations as his master was, but seems always to bow in pious martyrdom to the phantoms of his brain. Whereas Baudelaire did fight a battle, if a losing one, the disciple seems to be a very passive resister, willing to hold any "pathetic fallacy" to his bosom so long as it will render drab things beautiful and put a rosy light upon the hollow

cheeks of human squalor. He is not a facer of realities; the title of one of his novels, "In Exile," suggests his own attitude to the world and his conscious unfitness for it. He differs again from Baudelaire in not hankering for the light and splendour of that "Vie Anterieure" which the elder poet found of fatal relish in his youth, and in being, instead, wholly fascinated by the trance-like existence of the old Flemish cities which were his cradle and his grave. And in writing of these he uses the impressionism first found by painters in the chill and misty North (to which, probably for physiological reasons, Baudelaire was temperamentally averse), rather than the hard glitter and sharp outline that comes by nature to men of meridional blood on whom a clear sun shines; and to this again his elder was drawn, for the same reasons, by the indwelling harpy of his impoverished blood. The memory of peace time wanderings in Bruges should give an added wistfulness to many who may read the lines of its singer, who has now for seventeen years lain still.

In tiny townships when the morning drowzes,
The belfries chime the time in the still haze,
Where dawn looks down with sisterly, soft gaze,
The belfries chime the time above the houses.
With a pale music ere the world arouses,
Each chime a drifting blossom downward strays
Over the gable-stairs of the dim houses—

As though, up-gathering their misty flowers,
The wind had made a posy of sweet rhymes,
That tumble downward when a belfry chimes,
In faded garlands falling in soft showers
In lilies pale of far-away lost hours
From the dead forehead of forgotten times,
With chill sweet petals, sightless, in slow showers.

But the Baudelairean "frisson" comes in no way amiss to him, though the odours of the charnel house are less pungent in his work than the faint and sickly fumes from the sacristy of cloistered lives, whether burning in the cell of a "beguine" or on the hearthstone of a lay-brother. Here is one of his suggestions of the sinister.

At eve Dusk brings with her to every room
Fears unassuageable and manifold;
In swathes of moonlight under robes of gloom,
Then hovers she whose soft and feline hold
Is like smooth water on canals that lurk
To draw men down into their chilly murk.

Dusk is Joy's slayer—Joy that slowly dies,
Like handfuls of blown roses, when she sheds
Her inky phials out with furtive eyes;
Dusk stealeth down and with the twilight weds;
Into the shadowy soul she entereth,
And hides clear mirrors in the veils of Death.

Finally, to complete the proof of his literary genealogy, here is "Rain" rendered in the recurrent lines so dear to his great forerunner, with a quaver

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in the voice that reminds us of Verlaine, that repentant Parnassian (in a double sense) who in his own youth knelt at the same shrine.

O Rain! O Rain! An endless skein out-spun
From threads of water running off Time's wheel,
As though the tears of all since Time begun!
O Rain! O Autumn, and sad dusks that steal!
O Rain! O Rain! An endless skein out-spun!

What tongue shall tell the sadness of the sky,
That graveyard way so full of horrors dark,
Whereon the clouds like sleeping mutes go by,
Or palls that hide the dead stars lying stark—
What tongue shall tell the sadness of the sky?

Like to a limp, rain-sodden flag that weeps,
The soul is when the rain awakes its rue,
The wintry rain that pierces it and steepes
A shrunken tatter that hath lost all hue,
Like to a limp, rain-sodden flag that weeps.

For a more direct echo of Baudelaire's Parnassian manner and his wild nostalgia for the sumptuary splendour of tropic indolence, we must go to French Flanders, to the Lillois Albert Samain, whose weaning from the exotic manner is shadowed in the following poem on his native city, where while still in his teens he began to work for the support of his widowed mother and a younger brother and sister. It should be added that this devotion only ended with his death from consumption at forty-two, and this fatal predisposition may help to explain why his wistful music is so full of yearning for "an ampler ether, a diviner air."

A child I dwelt amid the sooty spawn
Of factories belching flame into the mist—
Black mills that suck down dying men for grist.
Save with shut eyes I never saw green lawn. . . .

Older I dreamt of Memphis and the Dawn,
And smell of sun-wooded flowers. I had a tryst
In old illustrious cities, and I'd list
O'er Tuscan flags the shining rapiers drawn.

But I grew sick of painting Mosque and Palm,
And now I hear the North's soul like a psalm,
My heart grown fain, O Motherland, of thee

My Flanders with thy saintly woman's gaze,
Thine upright folk that fear not calumny,
Thy hardships suffered with heroic calm,

Thy swamps, thy meadows with their flaxen sheens,
Thy boats, thy mindmills turning thro' the haze,
And this sad widow with her orphan'd weans. . . .

The terms of his second quatrain suggest thrall-dom to the historiographic style of Heredia. But there are differences. First, Samain's sonnets are, architecturally, far inferior to Heredia's, several of them running over into a fifteenth line—that above adding nine lines to its opening octave. Secondly, he paints as a lover what Heredia views as an epicure who prizes beauty with a calm intensity of detached delight in no way involving the heart's surrender. Even in this quasi-Parnassian work such

a line as "Un adieu rose flotte au front des monu-ments," reveals the impressionist to whom shadow is most articulate, whose power of vision is conditioned by his own mood of responsiveness or repul-sion towards the thing seen. But "à travers un temperament" was not a thing within Heredia's purview, nor perhaps within his power. It was the proud boast of his school to see things "as in them-selves they really are," and to paint them with an unswerving exactitude of line and colour that not seldom approached the clarity of scientific testimony. Here, however, is a sonnet in which he gives a direct challenge to Heredia on his own ground, and proves himself the equal of the master from whom he has learnt:—

Cleopatra.

Deep Night hangs heavily on Nilos' stream.
Under the burning starlight, She, grown pale,
Drives off her hand-maidens, and of the veil,
With a wide, shameless gesture rends the seam.
She flaunts her love-filled body in wild bliss
On the high terrace like a rounded grape
Swollen to ripeness; and her naked shape
Writhes like a serpent in the warm air's kiss.

Her wild eyes shoot out lightnings. She hath willed
The world with her sweet perfume shall be filled . . .
Dark flower of sex on the night's vastness shaking!
The Sphinx unmoving on the insensate sand,
Glow's thro' his granite like a burning brand,
And feels the unending desert round him quaking.

But it is a land "of mists and mellow fruitfulness" that holds his final allegiance, a land where the shifting lights of heaven are a mirror to men's moods, and to-morrow's twilight is not as to-day's nor as yesterday's. No poet has given such perfect illustration to Amiel's axiom that a landscape is an "état d'âme," each night and each morning bringing its soft wand or sharp goad to guide him. Here is one of his fifteen line sonnets freely rendered into another measure:—

Slowly we go, with the old dog close behind us,
Tread once again on the road too well we know.
Red thro' the leafy aisle the dying sunbeams filter;
Dark on the farther sky the grieving women go.
As on some cloister garth, green and cell-surrounded,
Still is the air with a sadness self-indrawn,
Each golden leaf over-ripened flutters downward,
Like a phantom memory, slow-falling on the lawn.

Silence walks between. . . . Hearts that furtively are
scheming,
Weary of their wayfaring and ripe for new emprise,
Brood on their secret hopes of sighting the old haven
Whence they set sail with the morning in their eyes.
But all the woods to-night are so fulfilled of sorrow,
That ev'n our hearts are moved to lay all self aside;
Soft are our stifled words that whisper in the twilight
Of dead illusions as of childrea that have died.

The feeling of a wanderer from the homeland is as strong in Samain's verse as in the "Retreat" of Vaughan; but the same transcendental reason is not assigned nor is any reason sought. With him the soul

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is a fickle waif that can brook no tethering; he has given his own character in a single line:—

"Mon âme est un velours douloureux que tout froisse." But the occasional exaltation of his poems (in contradistinction to their dominant note of lassitude), and the brave tenour of his own heavily burdened and too brief life, prove him to have been a mind of more resilient fibre than such an epigram would seem to allow. The following apotheosis of a poet's ambition, this dream of an august fame ("That last infirmity of noble mind"), keeps in the original to the strict sonnet form, and is entitled:—

Vigil.

To muse. In the void of night to thrill like the rushes! . . .
To be as a flame, pure, subtle, and quick with light;
And, breathing the air of the hovering Thought angelic,
Be ware, as a God's, of our mortal brows grown bright.
To spur heroic blood into noble action;
To spurn ignoble gauds, and the tinsel snare;
To put on pride as a coat of shining armour,
And leap from earth to the threshold of endless air!

To feel within, like a stream of the sea down-pouring,
The singing tide of the universal soul,
To hear in the heart the wings of the great archangels
Beating as Ocean beats on a hidden shoal:
To see like Solomon, girt with a royal splendour,
In pomp of gold, and perfume, and precious stones,
A life's long task bear down like the Queen of Sheba,
To greet us set like Kings on our royal thrones!

M. Valère Gille, until lately holding an important position at the Bibliothèque Royale of Brussels, at which city he was born forty-eight years ago, has special claims to consideration as one of the leaders in the movement started by Max Waller (D. 1889) for the complete instatement of the French language and its implied traditions as a right medium for Belgian writers. He took over the direction of "La Jeune Belgique" on its founder's too early death, and at thirty became laureate of the august Académie Française. His sonnet on Thermopylae is a worthy pendant to Heredia's "Trebbia," and that for the tomb of Baudelaire is not unworthy of standing beside Swinburne's greater tribute.

For this great heart with Saturn's sign engraven
Let no light monument upon an hill
Be reared amid green boughs: 'twould suit him ill.
Leave his dark spirit with the dark for haven.
Hew from the rock his tomb; and let the raven
Boughs of the yew instead of blossoms spill
About his sleep. If he be weary still,
O Night with silence be thy pathways paven!

Over the marble chill that hides his head
Black crows and loathed vultures that seek food
At eve shall voiceless and benumbed brood.
Grave neither torch, nor dove, nor flower. Instead
Respect his bitter thought. Let this be read:
"He was beloved of Sorrow, whom he woo'd."

M. Gregoire Le Roy was born, like M. Maeterlinck, at Ghent, and in the same year. His first poems

were a very litany of grief sung by a footsore pilgrim far astray from his undiscoverable shrine. He might almost have been accused of that wanton indulgence in the luxuriance of a consciously cultivated sorrow which Dante damns, and of being obstinately averse to the appeal of happier things. The title of his best known work gives perhaps too facile a suggestion of that common attitude which has been cruelly likened by the unsympathetic to a man walking with his head turned backward to gaze on a receding glory—an attitude which not unnaturally leads to stumbling and a bruised shin, for which the inclement heavens are blamed. Yet the plaints of "Mon cœur pleure d'autrefois" are lightened by some blithe pictures of our own day, not the less vivid for their suggestion of those slow ancestral rungs down which we have descended. We have only to read the line—

"Mon âme est une plaine en l'Infini couchée,"

to recognise at once to which group its writer belongs, for here is a symbol that is a very hall-mark of the school. Let us look at a sketch in which the author is not so self-indrawn, a pretty picture of a type that may (or might) be seen to this day on the quay-sides of Bruges or Ghent, ripe as a rosy apple under the starched frill of her white cap.

At her wheel the old, old granny
Tells of things as old as she;
Thro' drowsy lids she seems to be
A child that spins at a toy jenny.

The flax is gold, and white's her hair.
The old crone weaves it, very slowly;
That she may hark, she bends her lowly
Over the wheel that speaks her fair.

Her right hand turns the wheel alway,
And with the left the flax is spun;
She thinks herself a little one
That turns and turns the wheel in play.

The flax she spins is tawny gold;
She sees it, and it seems her hair;
And now she's dancing at the fair,
As round and round the wheel is roll'd.

'Tis smoothly now the wheel is plying,
Smooth the flax spins by above her;
Now she hears an ancient lover
Murmur how for her he's dying.

Now the wheel's last turn is done;
Empty hands before her spread:
Her love-stories like the thread
Of the flax have all been spun.

These few samples, like all versions, can give no more than a hueless outline of what their originals convey; but with a free play on the verbal counters of which they are built up, I have endeavoured to give as fair a counterfeit as translation can achieve.

WILFRED THORLEY.

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REVIEWS.

DOGGEREL.

A Ballad of the War. By LORD LATYMER. (Humphreys.)
IS.

Unless our memory fails us, Lord Latymer used to be plain Mr. F. B. Money-Coutts, who published various collections of small verse with Mr. John Lane. But F. B. Money-Coutts has apparently gone out of the Bodley Head into the Peerage, and he forsooth must needs publish himself with Arthur L. Humphreys, Esquire, of 108, Piccadilly. This *Ballad of the War* consists of pretty well eighty four-line stanzas, and would seem to owe its form and length to the famous ballad of John Gilpin. Arthur L. Humphreys, Esquire, of Piccadilly, has made a fine display of it in octavo size with a bold brown cover, and we gather from the cover and the title-page that the whole mammoth work is reprinted from the *English Review* of June, 1915. We have no hesitation in saying flatly that both Arthur L. Humphreys, Esquire, of Piccadilly, and Austin Harrison, Esquire, of the *English Review*, not to mention F. B. Money-Coutts, Esquire, now Lord Latymer, ought to blush profoundly at the sight of this their combined work. England is at war, and, according to Mr. Lloyd George, she is in need of silver bullets. Yet Austin Harrison, Esquire, can buy and pay for *A Ballad of the War* wherewith to burden the pages of the *English Review*, and Arthur L. Humphreys, Esquire, compasses printers, paper makers and such like artizans to put into type and publish the said ballad. At a moderate computation, at least fifty pounds of hard money must have changed hands in order that the world might be the poorer by this ballad, and yet the public hoardings shriek at us to put our five shillings into the War Loan. Lord Latymer can only be described as a blot upon the fair name of the ballad-mongers. Turn where you will in this stupid opusculum, you find merely rhymed stupidity.

Take the following eight lines for example:—

Australia heard the bugles sound
And Canada replied;
New Zealand too by blood was bound
To fight by Britain's side.

Then India's ancient land was stirred
From Cashmere to Mysore,
From Sind to Bengal's bay she heard
The summons to the War.

The line about Canada is embellished with an asterisk, which refers us to a footnote which runs: "Implying also Newfoundland." We put it to any

reasonable being how can Arthur L. Humphreys, Esquire, and Lord Latymer walk erect in England with this kind of thing upon their aristocratic souls. We decline to make these columns ridiculous with further quotation, but if Lord Latymer wants a master upon whom to model further futilities we should advise him to purchase the works of the author of the *Fireman's Wedding*.

A Short History of Modern England from Tudor Times to the Present Day.—By FREDERICK BRADSHAW, M.A., D.Sc.
(The University of London Press: Hodder & Stoughton.)
3s.

Apart from their accurate compression of facts text-books of history are important in the matter of tone and temper. "Only a small proportion even of graduates," says Dr. Bradshaw, "carry their historical studies beyond the stage of Matriculation," and it is unfortunately proverbial in this country that we grow up with an historical knowledge which suffers from the narrowness of the usual compilers of text books. When the "small proportion" to which Dr. Bradshaw alludes, "carry on their historical studies," it is to find that they are indifferently equipped, and that their view of history has to be considerably readjusted. Bearing these points in mind we may recommend this little book as useful both in imparting knowledge and developing taste. Here and there we notice omissions which we think might be remedied. For instance, in Dr. Bradshaw's able outline of the break-up of the religious and economic order with the Tudors he does not sufficiently indicate the important bearing which the dissolution of the religious houses in itself had upon the troublous history of the Poor Law. He is not always careful in his writing, and we think it would have been wiser to resist the temptations of carrying his history of modern foreign policy down to the opening stages of the war. To write history from newspaper information is dangerous. It has led Dr. Bradshaw into making such slips as his reference to "the proclamation of the Czar promising restoration of the Polish kingdom." The proclamation was by the hand of the Grand Duke Nicholas and not by the Czar, and whatever their breadth the terms did not include the restoration of a kingdom. These, however, are small points, and we do not mention them as characteristic of the book as a whole, but rather as exceptions in a remarkably skilful summary of modern history. It is a work which all may read with advantage to their historical knowledge. "The story of modern England," writes Dr. Bradshaw at

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the conclusion of his introduction, "is the story of the evolution of liberty side by side with order, under a splendidly false guise of a vindication of ancient rights"—a remark over which we should all do well to ponder.

Some New Sources for the Life of Blessed Agnes of Bohemia, including a Fourteenth Century Latin Version (Bamberg) and a Fifteenth Century German Version (Berlin).—By WALTER W. SETON, M.A., D.Lit. (Longmans Green & Co.) 6s. net.

Blessed Agnes of Bohemia, daughter of Premysl Ottocar I, and cousin of St. Elizabeth of Hungary, is an important though slightly known figure in Franciscan annals. She was born in 1205, and, having rejected offers of marriage by the Emperor Frederick II, first on behalf of his son and later of himself, and by Henry III of England, renounced the world and became a religious. She founded the Convent of Poor Clares at Prague in 1234, where she remained as Abbess until her death in 1282. Blessed Agnes, therefore, was a contemporary of St. Francis himself, a friend of St. Clare, and it was to her that St. Clare wrote the four letters which are regarded as the only authentic writings of the saint. She played a prominent part in the negotiations for the granting of the important Privilege of Poverty to the Order. But it was, Dr. Seton observes, "as a Franciscan of the first generation, and as one who had a leading part in keeping alive the ideals of the Founder of the Order during the half-century which followed her death, that Blessed Agnes deserves most to be remembered." Dr. Seton has made important researches among hitherto inaccessible manuscript sources, and the result of his labours, having been first issued as Vol. VII in the *British Society of Franciscan Studies*, is now presented to the world. In a singularly modest introduction he outlines the scope of his enquiry and discusses the new materials upon which his work has been based, namely, seven manuscripts. Finally, he gives on opposite pages with notes as to variations, the text of two manuscripts of the Legend of Blessed Agnes, one being in Latin and written by Katherin Hofmenin before she became Abbess of the Poor Clares at Nürnberg in 1380, and the other being written in the "Oberdeutsch" dialect with some distinct evidences of Swabian provenance. To the latter is added the text of St. Clare's four letters. In this way the Legend is presented to English readers for the first time. The book is enriched by reproductions of miniatures from a fifteenth century manuscript at Dresden, and contains a bibliography. This work is of such value to all those who

are interested in Franciscan origins, and in the period from a general historical point of view, that we should be doing Dr. Seton a disservice by entering into mere eulogies of the manner in which his researches and editorial work have been accomplished. The arrangement and contents of the book are in themselves a sufficient tribute to the rare scholarship of his undertaking.

Attila and the Huns. By Edward Hutton. (Constable.) 6s. net.

To write a history of Attila *apropos* of the present-day struggle is, we imagine, a task more suitably performed in a magazine than in a book. Mr. Hutton, however, has chosen to write history with one eye on his page and the other roving modern battlefields. The result is not good for history-making seriously considered, but as he writes with enthusiasm a great number of people will be induced to read about Attila who would not be so inclined were the legend not brought up-to-date. We think they will find Mr. Hutton a stimulating writer. Such passages as:

"In that long night such as might flee fled away doubtless demanding of God whither they should go. God led them to the lagoons. That Attila thought he was already victorious when he looked on his ruins as Kaiser Wilhelm did when his heart 'bled for Louvain' (blood from a stone indeed!) an incident twice recorded by Suidas bears witness."

are indicative that his is a breathless method of narration. Like Mr. Belloc, Mr. Hutton believes in writing history at the top of his voice. The last portion of the book is taken up with a reprint of the text of sources so that readers who do not admire Mr. Hutton's method can seek refuge in sober passages from Jornandes, Ammianus Marcellinus, and the others.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the *Academy*.

DUM SPIRO DUM FRIES.

Sir,—Your generous critique about *Infinito* of Dumfries requires a reply, as there is someone to defend—namely Dumfries. Our friends here reading your article were shocked to see that their beloved town—the "Queen of the South"—was treated as a contemptible little place of the world.

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